



COOKING OUT: Chef Alex Castro cooks up some shrimp at last year's event.

Ahhh, EUPHORIA

BY **CINDY LANDRUM** staff writer

Food, wine and music lovers get a party of their own

Organizers of Southern Exposure, the Upstate's high-end food, wine and music festival, found its name too limiting.

While the event featured guest chefs from all over the country, wines from all over the world and music from big names on the national scene, the name implied emphasis on all things Southern, said Carl Sobocinski, a Greenville restaurateur who co-founded the event with platinum-selling

singer-songwriter Edwin McCain in 2006.

"We wanted the name to be more global," he said, adding that the festival hopes to attract a French chef from Europe next year.

The event was renamed Euphoria, a title designed to reflect the excitement it will create when it's held Sept. 11 through 14 and the reputation it has gained in the culinary community.

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MUSIC MAKERS: Edwin McCain will take the stage during the four-day festival.

EUPHORIA CONTINUED FROM 57...

"It has evolved into a higher state of food, wine and music," Sobocinski said. "We believe that Greenville compares and competes with other great cities in the country for the culinary arts, the performing arts and entertainment."

And Sobocinski believes that Greenville's reputation as a culinary and entertainment destination is growing.

"It is changing very slowly," he said. "It's a process. Downtown wasn't built overnight. It took 20 years to get there. Euphoria is designed to give the effort credibility."

The event's growing reputation in the culinary and cooking community makes it easier to attract some of the nation's best chefs, he said.

And this year's event has no shortage of chefs with national reputations.

James Beard Award winners Rick Tramonto, chef at Tru in Chicago, and Gray Kunz, chef at Grayz in New York and celebrity chef and Food Network host Tyler Florence headline the event.

Euphoria kicks off Thursday night with a concert by two-time Grammy nominee singer-songwriter Chris Isaak at the Peace Center.

Friday's Taste of the South will feature sample dishes from several of the Upstate's finest restaurants, including High Cotton, La Bastide, The Lazy Goat, Soby's and Soby's on the Side.

Musical entertainment will be provided by McCain, a Greenville native whose latest album, "Nobody's Fault But Mine," is a collection of 15 vintage soul and R&B songs, and the Blue Dogs, a Charleston-based band.

It runs from 6 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. at the Peace Center amphitheater and Wyche Pavilion.

From 10 p.m. to 1 a.m. that night, a VIP party will be held at The Lazy Goat.

Cooking demonstrations and wine seminars on Saturday will give attendees a chance to learn from local and guest chefs as well as four master sommeliers from 10:30

Magic of Northwest Italy: Experience the Phenomenal Range of Aromas and Flavors that Piedmonte Wines Offer," "Pinot Noir: The Seductress of Red Wine," "Iberian Icons: Spanish Wines are Hot Right Now."

Florence, of "Food 911" and "Tyler's Ultimate" fame, is also scheduled to appear.

A Grand Wine Tasting will be held from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Last year's wine tasting featured 269 wines from 50 wineries, said Gina Boulware, marketing director for Table 301 Restaurant Group. At least that many are expected this year, she said.

On Saturday evening, guest chefs will prepare multi-course dinners at various downtown locations.

Shaun Doty, of Shaun's in Atlanta, will be hosted at 33 Liberty. Gray Kunz, of Grayz in New York City, will be at American Grocery. Kevin Rathbun, of Rathbun's, Kevin Rathbun Steak and Krog Bar in Atlanta, will be at High Cotton. Frank Lee, of Slightly North of Broad in Charleston, and Bryan Voltaggio, of Volt in Frederick, Maryland, will be at The Lazy Goat.

VIP guests will dine at either Devereaux's, featuring Scott Crawford, of the Georgian Room at Sea Island, and Ken Vedrinski, of Sienna on Daniel Island; or at Restaurant O, featuring Anthony Amoroso, of Michael Mina Bellagio in Las Vegas; Tim Graham, of Tru in Chicago; David Guas, of DamGoodSweet in Washington, D.C.; and Rick Tramonto, of Tru in Chicago.

Sunday's line-up will include a New Orleans-style Jazz Brunch and the Culinary Cook-off hosted by Florence.

Local and guest chefs team up and compete in what organizers call high-energy cooking entertainment.

Music will be provided by Mark Rapp and Walter Blanding.

Tickets range from \$45 to \$850. Boulware said that this year's event is being marketed outside of the region.

A majority of attendees come from the local area, which includes Asheville, she said. The rest come from Atlanta, Charlotte and Charleston, she said.

"Lots of markets have food and wine

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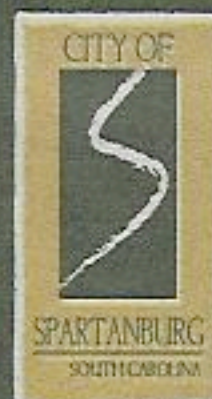
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Wine seminar topics include "The Terroir of Wine: Why Geography and Geology Matter," "The Mystique and

Magic of Northwest Italy: Experience the Phenomenal Range of Aromas and Flavors that Piedmonte Wines Offer," "Pinot Noir: The Seductress of Red Wine," "Iberian Icons: Spanish Wines are Hot Right Now."

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"Lots of markets have food and wine events. But the addition of music is our point of distinction," Boulware said.

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